

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 02022 210937Z
ACTION SNM-05

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 001

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 2022

FOR SCA, PPT, S/NM

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR
SUBJ: NARCOTICS LAWS IN MAURITANIA

REF: STATE 170187

1. BACKGROUND: IN SPITE OF MAURITANIA'S NUMEROUS PROBLEMS, NARCOTICS USE, PRODUCTION, OR TRAFFICKING ARE NOT INCLUDED. THE LAND IS NOT SUITABLE FOR GROWTH OF NATURAL NARCOTIC PLANTS SUCH AS MARIJUANA, OPIUM, OR HASH. THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION SHUNS IT DUE TO THE ISLAMIC INFLUENCE. MAURITANIA IS A DIFFICULT COUNTRY TO ENTER AND TRAVEL IN, THUS IT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE NORMAL TRAFFICKING ROUTES OF NORTH AFRICA OR CENTRAL AFRICA. THIS GENERAL SITUATION HAS RESULTED IN AN ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC MAURITANIAN PENAL CODES COVERING THE USE, POSSESSION, OR MARKETING OF DRUGS.

2. CONSULAR OFFICER RESEARCHED 1977 COPY OF PENAL CODE AND VISITED INSTRUCTOR STAFF OF LOCAL POLICE SCHOOL. THEIR RESEARCH ALSO INDICATED AN ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC LOCAL LAWS COVERING NARCOTICS. IN ONE OR TWO CASES KNOWN TO POLICE STAFF, MAURITANIAN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS WHO FOUND SUSPECTED DRUGS ON TWO EUROPEAN TOURISTS, SIMPLY REFUSED THEM ENTRY AND RETURNED THEM TO SENEGAL. THE POLICE SCHOOL INSTRUCTION COVERS ONLY A BRIEF 15 MINUTE SESSION ON THE TOPIC OF NARCOTICS SINCE THE PROBLEM IS NOT ONE CONFRONTED LOCALLY.

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3. ACCORDING TO THE POLICE SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR STAFF IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR THE MAURITANIAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM, WHEN CONFRONTED BY A LEGAL ISSUE FOR WHICH ITS OWN STATUTES DO NOT COVER, TO TURN TO THE LETTER AND THE LAW OF THE FRENCH PENAL SYSTEM. THEREFORE ANY WORLD-WIDE REPORT ON NARCOTICS LAWS SHOULD REFER TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT MAURITANIA WOULD USE

THE SPECIFIC FRENCH STANDARDS AS THEIR OWN, IF SO REQUEIRED.

4. THERE IS NO CASE DATA BASE UPON WHICH REFTEL QUESTION
CAN BE ANSWERED. AMERICAN CITIZENS CAUGHT WITH DRUGS SHOULD
EXPECT TO BE RETAINED IN PRISON. THE MAURITANIANS, EVEN UNDER
THE NEW JULY 1978 GOVERNMENT, WOULD CONTACT THE AMERICAN
CONSUL. KRYZA

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Message Attributes

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